THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) The internal consumption of natural gas during April 1999—Dec., 1999 by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd. (OIL) was 8.82 Million Standard Cubic Meters Per Day (MMSCMD) and 1.04 MMSCMD respectively.

The two companies utilise gas for meeting internal requirement of captive power generation, steam generation, operation of lift mechanism, production of value added products etc. Constant endeavour is made by these companies to keep the internal consumption of gas at the optimum level.

Gas supply Agreement with OIL

1636. DR. (SHRIMATI) JOYASREE GOSWAMI MAHANTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether signing of Gas Supply Agreement with Oil India Ltd. (OIL) has been lingering on for the last two years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is any pending issues relating to the Gas Supply Agreement, which are to be cleared by Government; and

(d) if so, what are the issues and the action intiated by Government so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) The Gas Supply Agreement between Oil India Ltd. (OIL) and Reliance Assam Petrochemical Ltd. (RAPL) in respect of the Assam Gas Cracker Project has been under negotiation between the two companies since the last two years. While most of the issues were resolved, there has been disagreement between the companies on the provisions relating to liquidated damages.

(c) There is no issue relating to the Gas Supply Agreement pending with the Government.

(d) Does not arise.

Reasons for Enhancing the Price of Natural Gas

1637. DR. (SHRIMATI) JOYASREE GOSWAMI MAHANTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state the reasons due to which Government enhanced the price of Natural Gas from the existing

subsidised level, thereby jeopardizing the economic operation of the existing consumers in the competitive market coupled with low import duty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): With effect from 1.10.1997, the consumer price of gas at landfall point is notified by the Gas Authority of India Limited. (GAIL) every quarter based on the changes in the international price of a basket of fuel oils. The linkage with the price of the fuel oils is as follows:—

Year	General Price	Concessional Price for the North-Eastern States
1997-98	55%	30%
1998-99	65%	40%
1999-2000	75%	45%

The floor and ceiling for the general price is Rs. 2150 per thousand cubic meter (MCM) and Rs. 2850/MCM, and that for concessional price for the North-Eastern States Rs. 12000/MCM and Rs. 1700/ MCM. In addition, a discount of Rs. 300/MCM is also available for the consumers in the North-Eastern States on a case to case basis. The consumers in the North-Eastern States continue to get gas at subsidised rates.

Demand of Oil Sector Officers' Association

1638. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Oil Sector Officers' Association representing 13 national oil companies are demanding more autonomy in their board;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of their demand for their pay revision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Oil Sector Officers' Assocation (OSOA) had made a demand that autonomy may be